
LESSON 5

NAVAL SURFACE FIRE SUPPORT (NSFS) AND AMPHIBIOUS FIRE SUPPORT PLANNING AND EXECUTION

The guns of most enemy warships have so powerful an effect on areas within their range that any advance into this zone dominated by fire from the sea is impossible.

-- Generals Rommel and von Rundstedt to
(German) Supreme HQ, 10 June 1941

The beach was a huge sheet of flame backed by a huge wall of black smoke, as though the island was on fire. The incredible power of the 16-inch salvos from the battlewagons was like nothing any of us had ever experienced.

--Dr. Eugene B. Sledge,
(then) a Marine waiting to go ashore on Peleliu

Introduction

Purpose

This lesson introduces you to

wThe means of fire support available for an amphibious operation today

wThe direction in which the Navy is taking, conceptually and technologically, to address Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) in the near and more distant future

wAn overview of the various supporting arms agencies, command responsibilities, and the sequence of events necessary for planning, coordinating, and controlling fire support during an amphibious operation

Continued on next page

Introduction, Continued

Why Study NSFS and Amphibious Fire Support Planning and Execution?	Amphibious operations are by nature the most complex of military operations. The control and coordination of all fires in support of amphibious operations must be orchestrated carefully to facilitate the achievement of ATF objectives and support the objectives of the commander.
---	--

Relationship to Other Instruction	The future of NSFS and the concepts the Navy develops have a direct bearing on the conduct of amphibious assaults and operational maneuver from the sea.
--	--

NSFS capabilities and considerations must be taken into account in the planning and execution of all amphibious operations.

Study Time	This lesson, including the issues for consideration, will require about 5 hours of study.
-------------------	---

Educational Objectives

Concept and Characteristics	Examine the concept and characteristics of naval surface fire support (NSFS). [JPME Area 2(a)]
Capabilities, Limitations, and Planning	Explain the requirements for, the capabilities and limitations of, and the planning considerations for fire support during amphibious operations. [JPME Area 1(a)]
Responsibilities and Relationships Between Agencies	Examine the organization, responsibilities, and relationships between the Supporting Arms Coordination Center (SACC), landing force Fire Support Coordination Center (FSCC), and other agencies that are involved in the coordination of supporting arms during each phase of the amphibious operation. [JPME Area 1(b)]
Current Joint Doctrine	Discuss how current joint doctrine for amphibious operations relates to doctrine of other services. [JPME Area 2(d)]
Future Direction	Discuss the future direction of NSFS in the Navy. [JPME Areas 2(b) and 5(c)]
JPME Areas/ Objectives/Hours (accounting data)	1/a/0.5 1/b/0.5 2/a/0.5 2/b/0.5 2/d/0.5 5/c/0.5

Discussion

Definition	Joint Pub 1-02, <i>DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms</i> , defines naval surface fire support (NSFS) as "fire provided by Navy surface gun, missile, and electronic warfare systems in support of a unit or units tasked with achieving the commander's objectives." Naval gunfire support (NGFS), the traditional mode of naval shore bombardment, is a subset of NSFS from which the broader concept of NSFS descended.
Historical Background	<p>Shore bombardment has been a role for navies shortly after guns were first put on the deck of a ship. Amphibious doctrine from its inception counted on NGFS for beach preparation, support during the assault and the ensuing fight, and interdiction.</p> <p>The big battleships of World War II were the quintessential platform for NGFS with multiple-mount 16-inch guns capable of lobbing 2,000-pound shells in excess of 20 miles. Although naval aviation and the age of the aircraft carrier superseded the battleships in war at sea, the fact that the Navy has recommissioned <i>Iowa</i> class battleships four times since they were first decommissioned after World War II has validated the enduring importance of NGFS.</p>
Fire Support Availability	<p>Today there is a significant deficiency in NSFS. All of the battleships have been permanently deactivated and there is an obvious gap in systems capabilities between the 5-inch guns and tomahawk missiles.</p> <p>The reduced size of the fleet and the multiple roles of each ship of the line also have reduced the number of ships available for the NSFS role.</p>
Near Term Requirements	<p>To meet the land warrior's pressing requirements by 2001, the Naval Surface Fire Support (NSFS) Program is designing, building, and fielding a responsive, lethal, flexible, and affordable NSFS combat system.</p> <p>This 5-inch/62-caliber gun weapon system will support fire for amphibious assaults, raids, demonstrations, or withdrawals; suppress and/or destroy hostile antishipping weapons; and air disrupt enemy movement and enemy reinforcement of defending forces.</p>

Discussion, Continued

Ongoing Initiatives

Several initiatives are underway to fully realize the Operational Maneuver From the Sea (OMFTS) vision by 2010.

These include

- wVertical Gun for Advanced Ships (VGAS)
- wForward Air Support Munition (FASM)
- wNavy Tactical Missile System (NTACMS).

The VGAS will be the workhorse in the 21st century. The VGAS is the most effective means to get a warhead down range and will execute both land attack and antiship missions.

Required Readings

Joint Pub Readings

Joint Pub 3-02, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations*. Find this reading in the *Joint Pub Readings* Vol. II (8800), pp. 399 to 818. Read the entire document. This publication provides guidance on the requirements, responsibilities, and documents associated with intelligence planning for an amphibious operation.

FMFM Readings

FMFM 1-7, *Supporting Arms in Amphibious Operations*, chapters 3, 7, 8 and Appendix I. Find this reading in the *FMFM Readings* (8800), pp. 45 to 125. These chapters focus on Concept Planning and Execution and present various situations that illustrate the functioning and cooperation between the supporting arms coordination.

Amphibious Operations Readings

wMorrall, Dennis (Capt), USMC. "Naval Surface Fire, Enabling Maneuver Warfare." *Surface Warfare*, July/August 1997. Find this reading in the *Amphibious Operations Readings*, Annex C, pp. C-3 to C-6. This issue of the magazine covers the Naval Surface Fire Support program for designing, building and fielding a lethal and flexible NSFS combat system.

wWright, Richard L, (Capt), USN. "Arsenal Ship, Potent and Punishing." *Surface Warfare*, January/February 1997. Find this reading in the *Amphibious Operations Readings*, Annex C, pp. C-7 to C-9. This article focuses on the purpose and the capabilities of the Arsenal Ship.

For Further Study

Supplemental Readings

The readings listed are **not** required. They are provided as recommended sources of additional information about topics in this lesson that may interest you. They will increase your knowledge and augment your understanding of this lesson.

wJoint Pub 1-02, *DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*.

wJoint Pub 3-02, *Joint Doctrine for Amphibious Operations*.

wJoint Pub 3-02.1, *Joint Doctrine for Landing Force Operations*.

wFMFM 1-7, *Supporting Arms in Amphibious Operations*.

wATP 8, *Doctrine for Amphibious Operations (Combined Operations)*.

Issues for Consideration

Responsibilities in Planning	What are the CATF's and CLF's responsibilities in planning for supporting arms?
Relationship Between SACC and FSCC	Define the relationship between the SACC and the landing force FSCC.
Passage of Control	What are the requirements for passage of control of supporting arms from ship to shore?
NGFS	With the final deactivation of the battleship and the reduced numbers of ships and guns mounted on them, is NGFS (at least as we have come to know it) gone?
Marine Corps' Fire Support Dilemma	Is the future Large Combat Munitions Ship (LCMS), or arsenal ship, concept the solution for the Marine Corps' fire support dilemma? If not, what are some other options?